

Dog Awareness Week 2018

June 2018

Intended audience: Delivery colleagues

Managers' brief

Introduction

Our sixth annual Dog Awareness Week takes place from Monday 25 June to Saturday 30 June 2018.

Our postmen and women are faced with the daily risk of coming into contact with loose and unsupervised dogs. Dog Awareness Week aims to educate customers and the public about responsible dog ownership, whilst showing colleagues how to keep safe when out on their rounds.

Overview

In the 12 months to April 2018, dog attacks fell by 8%. But that's still an average of seven postmen and women being attacked every day across the UK. This figure rises during the school holidays and summer months, when dogs are more likely to be unsupervised in the garden.

Of dog related attacks on postal workers, 37% have happened at the front door while 45% took place in the garden. That is 82% of all our attacks, so colleagues need to be vigilant in this higher risk area.

Always report an attack, no matter how minor they are.

This year we are also appealing to dog owners within Royal Mail, as well as their friends and family, to be conscious of how best to keep our delivery colleagues safe when there's a dog at the property.

Every dog - of every shape, size and breed - has the capacity to bite.

Actions

Tips to avoiding a dog attack:

- Never put your fingers through a letterbox - use a **posting peg**.
- **If there's a gate, rattle it** and wait a few seconds to see if a dog is present.
- **Never accept assurances** - always ask the owner to restrain their dog/s and step away.
- Use your **pouch or trolley as a barrier** between you and a dog, if approached.
- **Never tease** or antagonise a dog.
- Report all dogs on your duty via the **WRAP system**.

If a dog stops you from delivering mail, please endorse the items using a P6705 Unable to Deliver sticker. Please use the sticker to alert colleagues to the hazard and correctly account for the mail. When delivery is reattempted, the sticker also informs the customer that safety and responsible dog ownership is paramount.

Always remember to AVOID attack by:

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- A - avoid any interaction with dogs
- V - value yourself: don't put yourself at risk
- O - observe: keep your walk log up to date
- I - inform others of potential risks
- D - defend yourself if necessary, using your delivery equipment

If you are attacked

- Think about your own immediate safety. If you can, move away from the dog to somewhere safe, whether it's back to your van or a neighbour's house.
- Treat any wounds. If you need to go to hospital, call the police right away to generate an emergency response. If the injury is minor, it's always recommended that you seek medical treatment to make sure you don't get an infection from the dog as this can cause serious harm.
- Gather evidence from the scene by taking photos and descriptions of your injuries, the dog, the location of the attack and names of witnesses.

- o Did the dog have a collar or any specific markings?
- o What was the address where the dog was loose or came from?
- o Was the person in charge of the dog, or the owner, present at that time? What actions did they take?

- Once you're safe and being treated, report the attack to your manager, the police and local dog warden.

Advice to all dog owners

1. Ensure your dog is out of the way before the postman or woman arrives.
2. Keep your dog in another room before answering the door and make sure children don't open the door to the postman.
3. Distract your dog with some food or a toy when the mail is being delivered.
4. Invest in a letter cage or an external letterbox.
5. Ensure your dog is microchipped and wears a collar and tag that includes your up to date contact details.

Facilitation tips

- The Avoiding Dog Attacks film is available to play under the health and safety tab on screen demand
- Always ensure you have a P6705 sticker on hand to endorse mail when you return from delivery.
- Reference the AVOID material that has been sent to all units.